

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-17 (canceled)

18. (new) A conjugate comprising a polypeptide consisting of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2 and a constituent or constituents selected from the group consisting of: (1) a single branched poly(ethylene glycol) group having an overall molecular weight of about 40 kDa, and (2) two branched poly(ethylene glycol) groups having an overall molecular weight of about 40 kDa.

19. (new) A conjugate according to claim 18 wherein the polypeptide consisting of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2 is linked to one or two poly(ethylene glycol) groups by a member selected from the group consisting of: (1) cysteine 110; (2) cysteine 117; and (3) cysteine 110 and cysteine 117 of the polypeptide consisting of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2.

20. (new) A conjugate comprising a polypeptide consisting of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2 and a constituent or constituents selected from the group consisting of: (1) a single branched poly(ethylene glycol) group having an overall molecular weight of about 40 kDa, and (2) two branched poly(ethylene glycol) groups having an overall molecular weight of about 40 kDa, produced by a process comprising reacting a polypeptide consisting of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2 with activated (polyethylene) glycol under conditions such that said (polyethylene) glycol is chemically bound to said polypeptide consisting of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2 by

primary amino groups or thiol groups of the polypeptide consisting of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2.

21. (new) A composition comprising the conjugate of claim 18 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.